



**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)  
BERMUDA BRIDGE  
ENGINEERING / FEASIBILITY STUDY  
NATCHITOCHEES PARISH, LOUISIANA**

This Request for Proposals (RFP) invites responses from qualified, experienced professionals interested in submitting proposals for a feasibility study of the Bermuda Bridge in Natchitoches Parish. The purpose of the study will be to assess the feasibility of preserving and converting the former vehicular steel truss bridge into a pedestrian bridge across Cane River Lake.

Proposals will be reviewed by the Cane River National Heritage Area, Inc. (CRNHA), a non-profit organization that manages the congressionally designated Cane River National Heritage Area. Its mission is to preserve and promote Cane River's cultural and natural resources and encourage economic development by strengthening heritage tourism in the region.

**Submittal Deadline:**

**January 7, 2021 3:00 PM (Central)**

**Submit RFP Package to:**

**Rebecca Blankenbaker**

Executive Director  
Cane River National Heritage Area  
1115 Washington St  
Natchitoches, LA 71457  
[Rebecca@CaneRiverNHA.org](mailto:Rebecca@CaneRiverNHA.org)  
318-356-5555

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## I BERMUDA BRIDGE BACKGROUND

Bermuda Bridge is a triple Pratt truss bridge at the intersection of Highway 119 and Highway 494 in Natchez, Louisiana, near Oakland Plantation (part of Cane River Creole National Historical Park, a unit of the National Park Service) to the west and Shell Beach boat launch to the east. The bridge was built by African American labor in 1912 and is the only historic bridge crossing remaining on Cane River. It is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A and C for its associations with transportation and engineering. It also has associations with General George Patton and the Louisiana Maneuvers of World War II. In 1941, General Patton used the bridge as a strategic point during the training maneuvers and surrendered after being attacked by an unknown crossfire. It was later revealed that this crossfire was from three Prudhomme family boys, who repeatedly fired their carbide cannon from the front lawn at Oakland Plantation to Patton's position. It was the site of Patton's only career defeat.

Since the bridge was abandoned in 1982, the structure has been owned by Natchitoches Parish but has since fallen into disrepair. Due to its waterfront setting and significance in Cane River's history, preserving the Bermuda Bridge has long been an interest of the local community. The Parish completed a preliminary study on the bridge in the early 2000s but did not have the resources to pursue the project at the time. Since then, the Parish has partnered with the Cane River National Heritage Area, Cane River Creole National Historical Park, and Cane River Waterway Commission to revisit the project. All partners have shown great interest in moving the project forward to increase accessibility, provide pedestrian access between Shell Beach and Oakland Plantation, and enhance the visitor experience along Cane River.

On behalf of the Parish, the Cane River National Heritage Area is soliciting proposals for an engineering feasibility study and cost estimates to assess if the bridge can be rehabilitated into a pedestrian/bicycle bridge. As part of this study, the bridge will be inspected to determine if there is structural failure of steel members and how to best convert the former vehicle bridge into a pedestrian/bicycle bridge that safely allows visitors to access the water. The study will also determine the level of appropriate repairs to the structure, cost estimate for repairs, and provide guidance for the Parish and Heritage Area to move forward with the project.

## 2 PROJECT VISION

CRNHA's vision for this project (hereafter referred to as 'the Project') revolves around the preservation of the historic Bermuda Bridge, following the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Historic Preservation. The preserved and rehabilitated bridge will be re-used as a pedestrian walkway, connecting Oakland Plantation and Shell Beach. A series of trails would link the properties together and provide additional recreational and tourism opportunities within the area. The riverbank to the west will be cleared of invasive vegetation and a short trail will allow pedestrian access to the lake edge and/or floating dock on National Park Service property. Waysides will be placed at strategic locations to interpret the history of the bridge and the adjacent plantation grounds. See attached Conceptual Site Plan in the Exhibits section for more detail.

Funding an engineering feasibility study will be the first step in saving this unique structure and enhancing tourism within the area. The study will include inspections by a team of preservation engineers to determine level of deterioration, stabilization recommendations, cost estimates, and phasing for rehabilitation of the bridge. All findings and recommendations will be compiled in a draft and final report. If the project is found to be feasible, the Parish, National Park Service, Waterway Commission, and CRNHA will work together to use the final report to raise funds to carry out the repairs.

The feasibility study will be a partnership between all four entities to preserve the structure and convert it into a pedestrian bridge to link the boat launch area to NPS property through a series of pedestrian trails with interpretive waysides.

## 3 COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS & SUPPORT

CRNHA recognizes that successful reuse of the Bermuda Bridge requires coordination with and support from numerous local and federal agencies (including Natchitoches Parish, Cane River Creole National Historical Park, Cane River Waterway Commission, and local stakeholders). CRNHA will be responsible for this coordination during both this proposal process and throughout the feasibility study.

# 4 SUBMITTAL OF PROPOSAL

## RFP Submittals

Professionals and teams interested in submitting a proposal for this project should include the following in their response.

- **Letter of Approach** – The letter of approach shall include project description and project budget, including:
  - *Project Description / Project Understanding Statement* - Describe project, scope of work, and any other details that might help the review team better understand how you intend to complete the project. Also include any special skills and innovative thinking that the team would bring to the project.
  - *Development Budget* – Include budget (hard and soft costs) for completing the engineering/feasibility study. Total budget should not exceed \$25,000.
- **Statement of Qualifications** – The statement of qualifications shall include the following sections:
  - *Project Team and Demonstrated Expertise, Experience, and Knowledge* - For each firm, please include:
    - Firm name, business address, telephone number, email contact, and year established
    - State in which the firm was organized and incorporated and confirmation that the firm is licensed to do business in the State of Louisiana.
    - Type of ownership, and name and location of parent company and subsidiaries, if any.
    - Number of full-time employees. Part-time employees or consultants routinely engaged by the proposer may be included if clearly identified as such. Rate sheet for firms' employees for 2018.
    - *A description of the specific expertise, skills and services the firm offers.*
  - *Project Samples* - Descriptions detailing up to three completed projects that are similar or relevant to the proposed scope of work. Applicants are encouraged to provide graphic representations of and/or links to relevant projects.
  - *Additional Information* - Provide other information relevant to the applicant's abilities to successfully complete the work outlined in this RFQ.

## Submittal Requirements

In order to be considered, all submissions must comply with the following requirements:

- Completed responses must be received by Rebecca Blankenbaker by **3:00 PM Central time, January 7, 2021** at the email address listed on Page 1 of this RFP. All Proposals must be received by CRNHA no later than the deadline. Proposals and/or modifications received after this time will not be accepted or reviewed.
- Submittals must not exceed 30 sheets (60 pages as a double sided document) and all pages should be numbered sequentially.
- All submissions must be submitted electronically as a single PDF document attached to an email. The email title should include: "RFP for Bermuda Bridge"
- Faxed and hard copy proposals **will not** be accepted.

## Evaluation & Selection Process

All submissions will be evaluated by an in-house review and selection committee whose members will likely include relevant staff from the Cane River National Heritage Area, Natchitoches Parish government, Cane River Creole National Historical Park, and Cane River Waterway Commission.

The selection process begins with the receipt of this RFP submittal. Applicants will receive a confirmation email once their submittal is received. Within a reasonable period of time after receipt, the Heritage Area shall select the successful respondent(s) based on qualifications. If negotiations with the selected project team are unsuccessful, CRNHA may begin negotiations with the next highest ranked team. CRNHA reserves the right to accept the entire proposal or a part of the proposal.

## Questions

Direct all questions regarding this RFP to [Rebecca@canerivernha.org](mailto:Rebecca@canerivernha.org). **Questions will be accepted up until noon on December 18, 2020** to ensure all parties have adequate time to review the answers.

## Anticipated Schedule

It is anticipated that the contract will be awarded no later than March 2021, with the bulk of the work to take place in the months following the award. A draft report is anticipated in May 2021, with a final report no later than July 2021. Teams should acknowledge their understanding of and ability to meet this schedule in their response to this RFP.

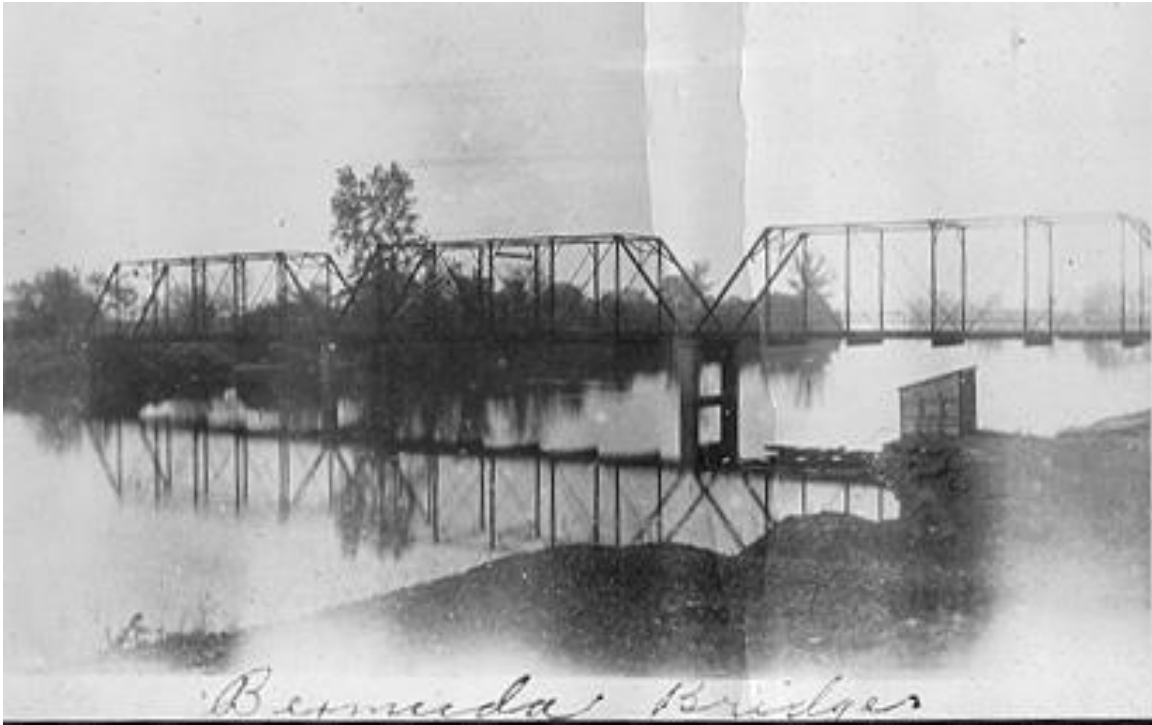
## Other Terms

- CRNHA reserves the right to accept or reject any or all responses to this RFP, with or without cause. All decisions related to this solicitation by CRNHA will be final.
- CRNHA reserves the right to request clarification of information submitted and to request additional information of one or more respondents.
- Costs for preparing the RFQ in response to this request are solely the responsibility of the respondent. All materials submitted in response to this RFP become the property of CRNHA and will not be returned to the respondent.
- This solicitation in no way obligates CRNHA to award a contract. CRNHA reserves the right to amend/terminate contract with written notice.
- Equal Opportunity – The selection of consultant shall be made without regard to race, color, sex, age, religion, national origin, or political affiliation. The Heritage Area is an Equal Opportunity Employer and encourages proposals from qualified minority and woman-owned businesses.
- All contracts with Cane River National Heritage Area will be in accordance with all applicable Federal, State and local laws, regulations and ordinances.

# 5 EXHIBITS



Bermuda Bridge, circa 1920s.  
Courtesy: Cane River Creole National Historical Park (CARI) collection.



Bermuda Bridge, circa 1920s. Courtesy: CARI collection.



Bermuda Bridge, looking southwest from Parish Road 610, December 2018. Courtesy: CARI.

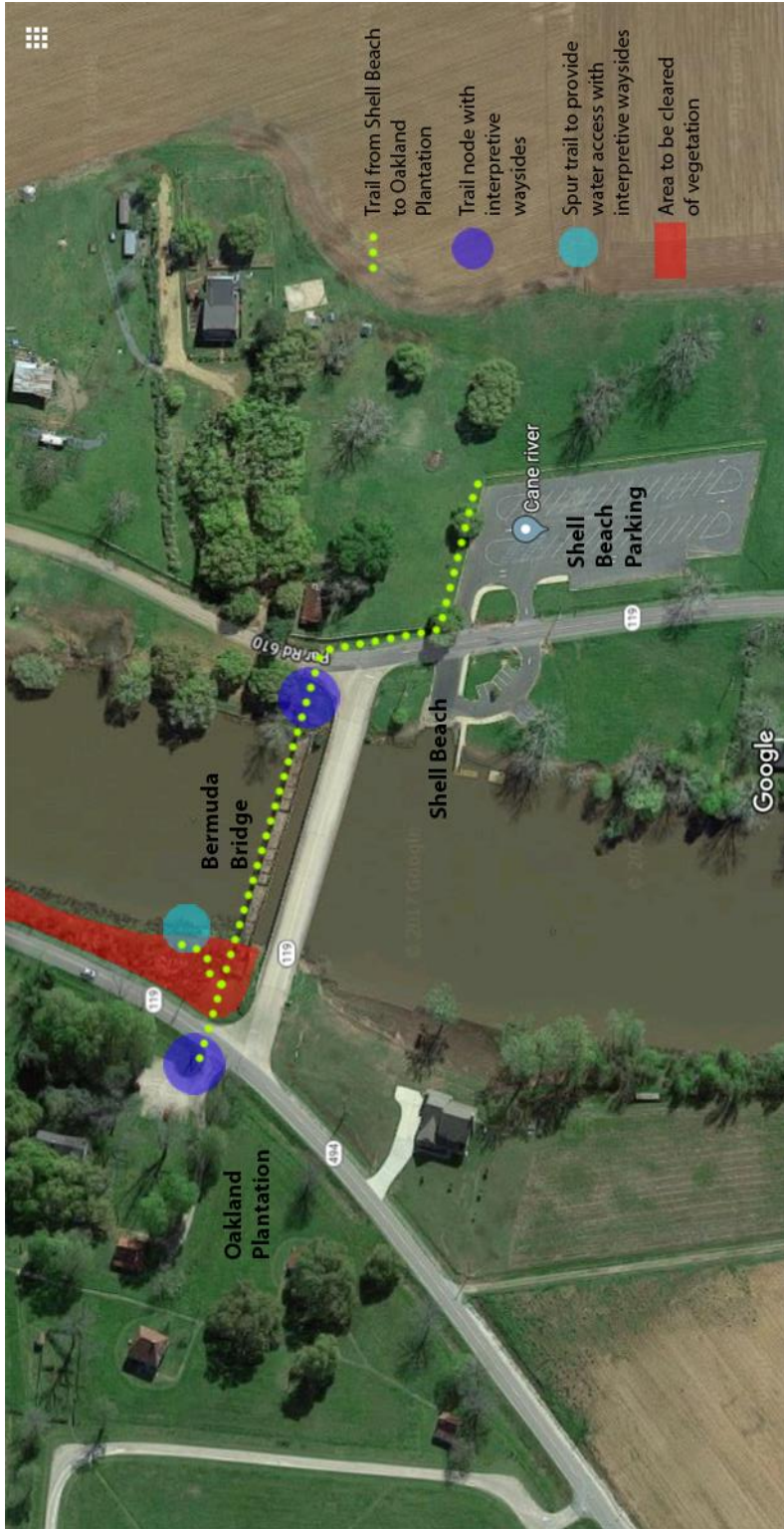


Bermuda Bridge, looking west from Highway 119, December 2018. Courtesy: CARI.



Bermuda Bridge, looking northeast from Highway 119/494, December 2018. Courtesy: CARI.





Proposed conceptual plan to adaptively reuse Bermuda Bridge to provide a pedestrian connection between Shell Beach and Oakland Plantation.